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Senate

The Senate met at 9:45 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable DEAN HELLER, a Senator from the State of Nevada.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Loving God, Your providence guides our going out and coming in, and we praise Your great Name.

Today, help our lawmakers to exercise that cool judgment that is worth far more than a thousand hasty words. Remind them that soft answers turn away anger and that humility precedes honor. As they work to do what is best for our Nation and world, use their lips to provide more light than heat, as their words build up instead of tearing down. May the words of their mouths and the meditations of their hearts glorify You.

And, Lord, bless the faithful members of our fall page class as they prepare to leave us.

We pray in Your mighty Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, January 28, 2016.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable DEAN HELLER, a Senator from the State of Nevada, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ORRIN G. HATCH,
President pro tempore.

Mr. HELLER thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

ENERGY POLICY MODERNIZATION BILL

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, the last time a broad energy bill was signed into law was back in 2007. It may as well have been a lifetime ago as far as America's energy situation is concerned. While we were once living in an era of energy scarcity, we are now living in an era of higher energy production and lower technology costs. It is change that represents many opportunities but also challenges—aging infrastructure, bureaucratic hurdles, outdated policies, and needless redtape. These are the kinds of challenges we will need to address if we want to support America's rise as one of the world's preeminent energy superpowers and if we want to support the accompanying potential for jobs, for growth, and for increased energy independence. That is why the Senate is considering the Energy Policy Modernization Act. It is broad, bipartisan legislation that will modernize our energy policies to keep pace with a changing world. It will help Americans produce more energy. It will help Americans pay less for energy. It will help Americans save energy.

This bipartisan bill builds on technological progress in order to strengthen and sustain America's energy advances while protecting our environment at the same time, all without raising

taxes or adding to the deficit. It is the latest reminder of what is possible with cooperation in this Senate.

A huge majority of the Senate energy committee supported the bill when it came to a vote. The top Republican on the committee supported it and the top Democrat on the committee supported it. They are the managers of this bill today. They have worked with Members of both parties and have lined up amendments already. They are working with Members of both parties to schedule even more. If you have an amendment you would like considered, please work with them. Let's get this process moving. Let's get this bill passed so we can support more jobs, more growth, and more energy independence for our country.

TRIBUTE TO MIKE BRUMAS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, before I leave the floor, let me say this as well. The chair of the energy committee knows how to write good legislation. We have proof of that before us today. But here is something else: The chair of the energy committee also knows how to pick good staff. Take Mike Brumas as one example. He served as her communications director. He served as communications director for the junior Senator from Alabama, too, and as chief of staff for the State's senior Senator. Mike also spent time covering Washington back when he was a reporter.

Mike Brumas obviously had a lot of experience under his belt by the time he came to work for me. Mike was an important part of my team, he worked hard, and he earned positions of trust among respected Members of our conference and among the Washington press corps. Mike was there both in the minority and in the majority as we made our way through many challenges, but he never let his good humor or his zest for life get lost along the way.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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